

THE VOICE.....

Spring '54

by Dorothy M. Coffman, '55

"YOU ARE TUNED TO 600, THE VOICE OF SMITH COLLEGE, WCSR IN NORTHAMPTON." Eighteen times a day, these words radiate out over Elm Street, past the Quad, College Hall, and the banks of Paradise. They spread out over the whole campus bringing good music, drama, and news to Smith students.

Only a short six years ago, WCSR was little more than a dream... but it was a dream that had to be fulfilled. Campus interest in a radio for Smith, which began back in 1941 when students first produced shows over the local commercial stations, was aroused. By 1948, Marjorie Boselly ('49) and her radio committee had "made it." Slaving to create a campus-wide interest, the Radio Committee attended intercollegiate radio conferences and gathered information about other college radio stations. Undaunted even though Mr. King had announced that "there is no hope for a Smith radio station this year nor any promise of one in the future", Marjorie Boselly and her committee did not give up. They just kept on going to more conferences, and collecting more information. They trained themselves in announcing and production techniques. They sent for plans, technical advice, and suggestions on organizing a radio station. Campus enthusiasm mounted tremendously as the student newspaper whole-heartedly supported the committee.

At last, in April 1948, President Davis gave them the green light. The entire campus cheered; and showed their approval by an almost unanimous vote to place WCSR on Blanket Tax, thus donating \$2.00 each to the cause. A grand total of \$4100 finally put WCSR on the air in November that year.







At first WCSR encountered many set-backs : power failures, faulty equipment, lack of records, and an inexperienced staff. College support however, was strong...so strong, in fact, that in only one month more than 700 records were donated by the students for radio use; and gradually, WCSR came into its own.

In the spring of 1950, WCSR joined Amherst's WAMF in the first <sup>in N. E. Mass.</sup> intercollegiate radio network in the United States. The union was celebrated with a huge broadcast emanating from Davis Center where more than 500 persons active in radio and educational fields in the Connecticut Valley, Boston, and New York areas were audience for the opening ceremonies.

Since then, PBS, the Pioneer Broadcasting System, has successfully combined the talents of Smith and Amherst. During one week each spring, for example, the PBS Drama Festival features eight to fourteen plays written or adapted for radio by Smith and Amherst students. All the roles are enacted by students and directed by station personell. WCSR has a full-time drama director, Ann Cadman ('55), who this year has done some excellent work on her hour-long Sunday Night Drama Show. This type of work has proven to be a marvelous opportunity for the whole campus. Other network programs include afternoon and evening classical music features, disc-jockey shows which give away free passes to the Academy of Music and the Calvin Theaters, as well as United Press news shows, a Lucky Strike program, and an unique Friday morning show "Breakfast With Boo and Bob", with Boo Barbour ('55) in the studios at Smith and her friend Bob in the studios at Amherst. PBS has taken a very pleasant turn in the past two years...not only is there full cooperation between the brother and sister stations, but there is also a little not so "brotherly" romance in the air. WCSR's station manager is "pinned" to last semester's Amherst station manager!



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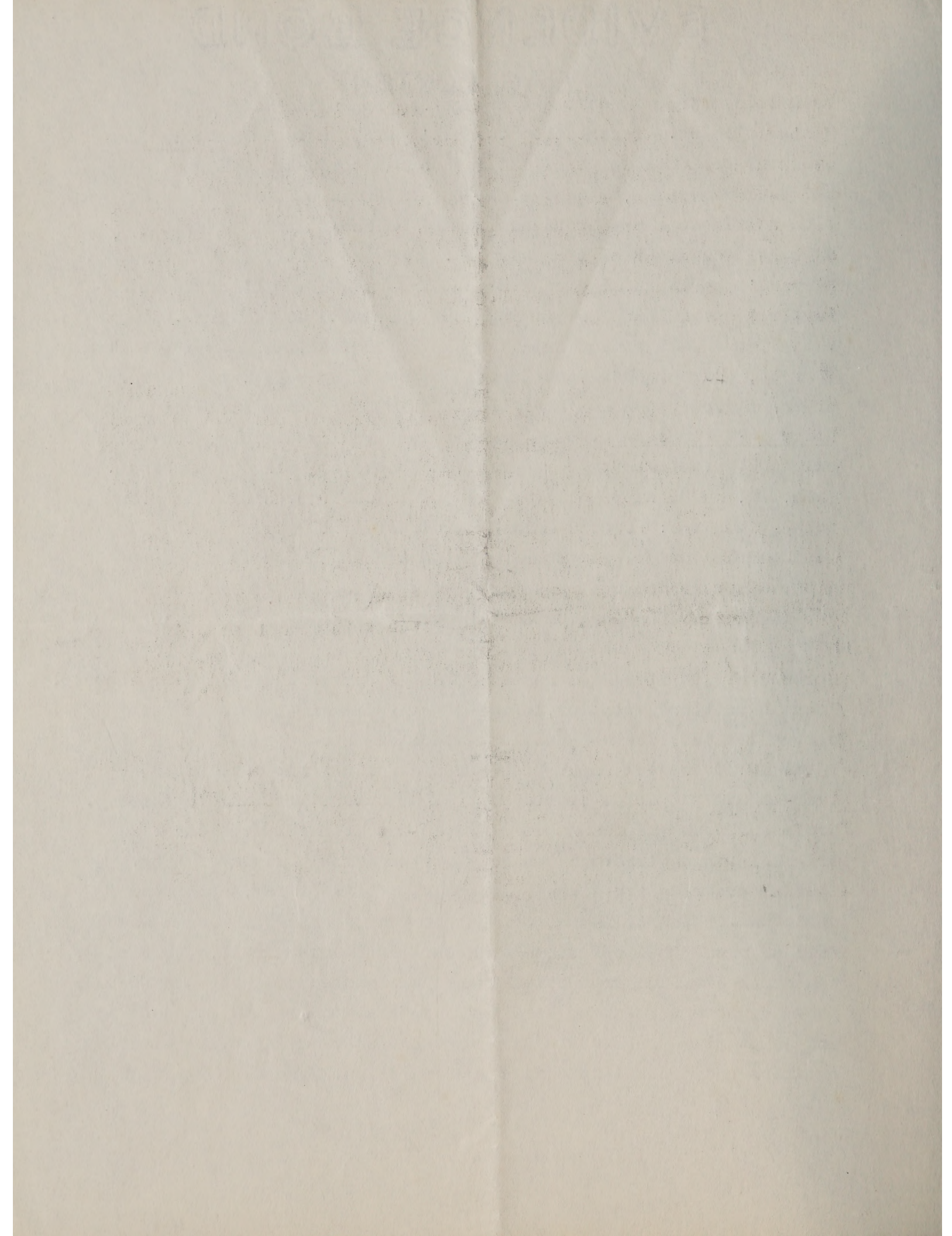
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WCSR also enjoys a healthy exchange of programing with other men's colleges. A recent trip to Yale's WYBC where they took over the broadcasting facilities (control board and all) for the entire evening, brought eight enthusiastic WCSR members back with new ideas along broadcasting and business lines as well as many plaudits from the Yale men. WCSR frequently entertains too. Harvard's WHRB produced an evening of broadcasting at Smith which featured special tape recordings they had made at Harvard..such things as a Gilbert and Sullivan choral recital, the Budapest String Quartet, a Purcel opera, the Boston Stevenson speeches, and a recording of an original student interpretation in poetry and music of Alice in Wonderland . WCSR members were really envious; they have only one inadequate tape recorder, incapable of doing such things. Yale, MIT, and Trinity Colleges all put in their evenings at Smith this spring too; and drew a large crowd of Smith girls to the studios at 10 1/2 Prospect Street. WCSR has also exchanged weekly tapes with the Princeton radio station, and is currently conducting a request show for Dartmouth's WDBS.

Throughout its five year career, WCSR has served the college interests. As an educational station, it takes great delight in broadcasting campus debates such as "Should the college houses remain open until 10:30 on week-nights" or "Should Juniors have unlimited over-nights?" Special events play an important part in programming. Professor John Duke made his radio debut at Smith with three original songs performed publicly for the first time over WCSR. Special programs are always planned for Thanksgiving, Easter, and Christmas. Father's Day at Smith this year found WCSR with a house full of proud "Daddies" whose daughters on the technical, advertising, and announcing and production staffs all wanted to show them why they had been working so hard for the "station". Smith students write and adapt plays for WCSR's drama productions, and interview visiting speakers and prominent campus personalities. Miss Cynthia Walsh,







president of the Hampshire Bookshop, gave bi-monthly book reviews which were well received. Campus talent shows featured Smith singing groups, quartets, piano recitals, and popular song contests. Classical and light music for listening or study fill most of the broadcasting schedule but these special programs and others such as "Stories to Scare By" and "Tea at Two" (which actually serves cakes and cookies from the "Mary-Marg. ") provide an excellent outlet for the originality and inventiveness of Smith students.

WCSR's future history is being carefully planned. Now broadcasting a total of 55 hours a week, next fall the standard will be 84 hours each week. Beacuse the radio staff ~~was~~ increased by more than 100% in April, more special interest programs and classical music shows are being created to fill the increased number of broadcasting hours. Plans are underway to gradually purchase better technical equipment; the cable to each dormitory should be completed this summer. New candidates for WCSR are given a thourough training during a nine week period, in radio policies, techniques, and proceedures. This spring WCSR admitted 54 new members, many of whom show great promise.

Next November will complete WCSR's sixth year of broadcasting. WCSR members are very proud of their past work..but are continually improving. Radio proficiency at Smith has now reached a new high and WCSR is bound and determined to maintain its reputed place as America's finest women's college radio.



Sally Davis

- Here's the copy for  
the Alumnae Quarterly.  
Keep it if you like, or  
return with comments  
for our scrap-book.

Dottie

Almost too Rosy